

Daily Host Nation Stories for June 19, 2020

Seven-day R rises significantly

The estimated value of the reproduction figure determined by the Robert Koch Institute the so-called simple R-value remains at the previous day's level. The RKI indicated the current level at 0.86. This means that an infected person infects on average less than one other person. The seven-day R given by the RKI is currently 1.00. This value is thus significantly higher than the previous day's value of 0.89. The seven-day R refers to a longer period and is therefore less subject to daily fluctuations. (*Robert Koch Institute, June 18*)

Regular operation with school opening risks debated

Shortly after the opening, some schools in Germany had to close again. The ministers of education are currently discussing concepts, but there are many problems ranging from teacher shortages to dilapidated buildings.

Every day, parents have to sign that their child is healthy to the best of their knowledge. Masks are worn in the corridors and on the school bus. Distance rules between the children do not apply, which, according to unanimous opinion, would not be sustainable at primary schools. "Primary school children need closeness, need their group and need their friends in primary school," says Minister of Education Karin Prien. A good week ends with a thoroughly positive balance.

Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, NRW and Thuringia have also already started regular operation in primary schools. But things are not going as well as in Schleswig-Holstein. In NRW there were corona cases at four primary schools after three school days. In Wuppertal, an elementary school with 350 pupils had to be closed completely because one pupil was infected. For pupils and parents this means no more lessons until after the summer holidays.

In Magdeburg, nine primary and secondary schools have already been completely closed. There have been 76 newly infected in the city since June 8, most of them in connection with the outbreaks in the schools, which were partly registered by pupils and partly by teachers. The outbreaks spread over large parts of the city.

"The question of how infection protection - also for teaching staff - can be properly implemented is still unresolved," says Hoffmann, adding that this would turn teachers into guinea pigs who simply accept infection.

One of the central problems is that the conditions at schools vary greatly from state to state, from city to city and sometimes from school to school. Some master the situation with flying colors, others are so dilapidated that classrooms have their

windows nailed shut because anything else would be too dangerous. And in schools where pupils do not even use the toilet, regular hand washing is not possible.

Up to 30 percent of teachers could be absent. When the schools in all federal states return to normal operation after the summer holidays, as provided for in an agreement between the federal government and the states, another problem is likely to worsen: the shortage of teachers. The shortage of teachers is already particularly severe - especially at primary schools. According to a survey conducted by "Die Welt" among ministries of education and education representatives, in future there will probably be a shortage of between ten and 30 percent of teachers of all school types in most federal states. It is unclear how regular operation is to be guaranteed throughout the country. The Conference of Education Ministers is discussing appropriate concepts, especially with regard to hygiene standards, today and tomorrow. It has already been decided that the 1.5-metre distance rule should be abolished; instead, there should be fixed learning groups. (*Tagesschau, June 18*)

Results of the vaccine study expected in summer

The head of the first clinical trial involving the corona vaccine produced by the company Curevac at the University Hospital of Tübingen expects to receive the first results within two months. "This will be quite fast," said Professor Peter Kremsner, Director of the Institute of Tropical Medicine where the substance is being tested. The test subjects were tested on Thursday, but the first vaccination is still pending.

The first test person is a young person. "He will then be monitored in our department for 24 hours," said Kremsner. The goal of the first phase of the study is to find out about the tolerability and the immune defense. Gradually, more than 100 healthy volunteers aged between 18 and 60 years are to participate in the study.

The Tübingen-based company Curevac is working on so-called mRNA vaccines. mRNA is a kind of messenger molecule that contains the building instructions for the production of proteins. For their vaccine, the Curevac researchers have provided mRNA with the building instruction for a coronavirus Sars-CoV-2 protein. After vaccination, the human cells produce this protein, which the body recognizes as foreign. It forms antibodies and other defense cells against it.

Kremsner said that this is a home game for the University Hospital in Tübingen. In phase two of the study, the group of volunteers will be expanded to include older people. At some stage, children will also be given the vaccine candidate. The preparation of the study took two months and approximately 30 employees are involved. (*Stuttgarter Nachrichten, June 19*)

128 new corona cases in Berlin

The city of Berlin reports 128 new cases of coronavirus. According to the reporting data, there were more new infections in one day, most recently on 15 April. It is quite possible that the increase in the number of cases is related to the infection rate in Neukölln. There, 369 households are currently in quarantine because of a corona outbreak. Nevertheless, the capital's corona traffic light jumped back to green after displaying yellow on Wednesday. The current R-value in the city is 1.01. (NTV, June 18)

Lord Major Vöhringer promotes Corona App

The City of Sindelfingen is in favor of the new Corona-Warn-App. The application makes it easier to trace contact chains in the corona pandemic.

Lord Mayor Dr. Bernd Vöhringer has already installed the App himself and appeals to the people of Sindelfingen: "Fortunately, in recent weeks we have been able to put more and more measures behind us due to the declining incidence of infection and return to normality. In order to be able to continue on this path, we must break through possible chains of infection at an early stage." The Corona-Warn-App supports the health authorities in this task and makes a great contribution - if it is used by as many people as possible, it can limit local outbreaks.

The Corona-Warn-App of the federal government helps to determine whether there has been contact with an infected person and whether there is a risk of infection. In this way, chains of infection can be broken more quickly. Download and use of the App is completely voluntary. It is available free of charge in the App Store or Google Play. (Press Release – City of Sindelfingen, June 18)

Stuttgart Airport runway renewal completed

As of Thursday, Stuttgart Airport's runway will be back to its original condition; 3,345 meters in length are available again for air traffic. All construction site restrictions were removed and markings and signage adapted. On a part of the runway, the concrete slab was renewed over a length of around 1,200 meters. Due to the corona pandemic, the construction work, which had been planned for a long time, had to start earlier than scheduled. Therefore, air traffic in Stuttgart was suspended April 6 – 22 and April 23 to May 20.

The runway with a maximum length of 1,965 meters was still available, while parallel work was carried out on the construction site. From May 21 until June 17, aircraft could use 2,475 meters for take-off or landing. (*Stuttgart press release, June 18*)

Parts of accommodation for quarantined refugees in Nüssstraße

Due to a case of infection with the corona virus, parts of the connecting accommodation for refugees in Nüssstraße had to be quarantined. The sick person is undergoing treatment in hospital, the 13 contact persons concerned were quarantined in a separate area of the building.

"I wish the sick person a speedy recovery and the contact persons the best of health. As a city, we have acted quickly and separated parts of our accommodation accordingly. I would like to thank the colleagues on site in the care department, who handled the situation very well," says Lord Mayor Dr. Bernd Vöhringer. "The current case shows that the virus is still rampant in our city. Despite the relaxation of measures, we are all called upon to continue to exercise caution and do our utmost to prevent the virus from spreading further." (*Stuttgart press release, June 18*)

Renewed corona eruption near Beijing

Following the renewed corona outbreak in Beijing, travel restrictions have been extended to the area surrounding the Chinese capital. Authorities largely sealed off the neighboring Anxin district with its approximately 460,000 inhabitants. Travel in and out of the area was largely prohibited. At the same time, the authorities assured that the renewed outbreak of the virus in Beijing was "under control." According to state media reports, only vehicles that are needed for the basic supply of the Anxin district, which is about 150 kilometers from Beijing, are allowed into the district. Other vehicles require a special permit. (*NTV, June 18*)

Self-disinfecting protective mask in development

Israeli researchers are developing a reusable breathing mask that can kill the corona virus by applying heat. The mask has a USB port that can be connected to a power source such as a cell phone charger. (*NTV, June 18*)

Works Council Verdi fears massive staff cuts

The trade union Verdi drew attention to the situation of employees in ground handling services at Stuttgart airport on Friday. The employers must take responsibility and increase payments if short-time work continues, demanded Verdi functionary Andreas Schackert at a rally with about 20 participants.

Around 1,100 men and women work in Stuttgart in the terminal area, on the apron and in baggage distribution. Events were also planned in Munich, Hamburg, Bremen, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt/Main, Berlin and Cologne. The corona crisis has hit the industry hard. A government rescue package worth billions was put together for Lufthansa, for example. Verdi fears a "massive reduction in personnel" in the air transport industry and speaks of existential fears among employees. According to

Verdi, some 300,000 people work in the air traffic industry in Germany. (*Stuttgarter Nachrichten*, June 19)

Non-corona News

99 sun beds available for visitors at the Cannstatter Kulturwasen

The boxes with partitions made of Euro pallets decorated with plant pots look like boxes. With four loungers on wood shavings each, they will be right up front at the Cannstatter Kulturwasen in future, between the stage and the car audience. The state has allowed events with up to 99 visitors, provided that the rules of distance are observed. Each lounger receives a small receiver and disposable headphones that can be taken along, or you can bring your own headphones. For the new area, which will celebrate its premiere next Wednesday at Arnd Zeigler's performance with his "wonderful football world," there is a separate entrance from the stage side below, i.e. from the side of the mineral baths in Leuze. Bike racks are available. Cars, in which four people from four households can now sit, continue to drive onto the grounds from the upper side of the Wasen, from the Schleyerhalle. If the state approves further loosening, including events with 499 visitors, "we can expand the car-free area in front of the stage at any time," says organizer Matthias Mettmann from Chimperator. The organizers offer further events for advance ticket sale starting Thursday: On July 5 there will be a German-Turkish evening; on July 8, Christopher Street Day; on July 24 singer "Doro" will perform; on July 25, the Stuttgart Ballet will broadcast its ballet evening "Response" from the opera house on the Wasens' LED wall for free admission (advance bookings are required); On July 31, "Gestört aber Geil" will perform; on Aug. 1, "Topas and Roxanne" will perform a magic show; on Aug. 2 there will be a pop evening with Vincent Gross; on Aug. 13 and 20, there will be a performance of "Moving Adventures - European Outdoor Film Tour." Another great concert on screen will be shown on the Wasen: "Rammstein" will be on the big screen on June 19, and the group "Tote Hosen" on June 20. (*Stuttgarter Nachrichten*, June 19)

Stuttgart-South construction site affects shops

At the moment, pedestrians are slalomed through the lower part of Böblinger Straße, small passages allow access to cafés and shops. Previously, motorists had been at a disadvantage for weeks because the section at the level of Adlerstraße in the direction of the Heslacher Hallenbad was closed and had to be bypassed out of town. Only for the shop owners is the situation consistently bad, although they are already badly shaken by the pandemic. The construction work is not expected to be completed until 30 June. (*Stuttgarter Nachrichten*, June 19)

Robberies at Stuttgart apartments on the increase

A masked man attacked a 77-year-old in her Hedelfingen apartment around 11:40 p.m. on Wednesday. "The motive is completely unclear," says police spokesman Stephan Widmann. It is unclear why the woman was targeted.

On May 22, an 86-year-old homeowner and her 57-year-old roommate in Reutlinger Strasse in Degerloch were attacked and robbed by a trio. Both were tied up and beaten. The perpetrators fled with several hundred euros. The investigation is ongoing. This is not the first time a brutal act occurred: on February 11, a pair of robbers struck at the same elderly woman. (*Stuttgarter Nachrichten*, June 18)

New school of Stuttgart Ballet begins

The Stuttgart John Cranko School of Ballet is attended by interested children as well as top talents from all over the world. Now the Cranko School is moving into a new home. After five years of construction, the 60 million Euro project will open in mid-September.

However, the corona pandemic also forces its rules on the restart in Stuttgart. "The most painful decision was to change from double to single room occupancy at the boarding school," says Tadeusz Matacz. Nevertheless, Matacz's anticipation outweighs his anticipation. The new Cranko School not only offers optimal training conditions. Anyone who moves around in the new building has a view of the State Theatre area with the playhouse and opera house, home of the world-famous Stuttgart Ballet.

With the handing over of the keys, the responsibility of the Baden-Württemberg Ministry of Finance ends. "The key to the new John Cranko School building is, for me, a key to top performance and art," says Finance Minister Edith Sitzmann (*Stuttgarter Nachrichten*, June 19)